

Gospel - Repentance :

O R,

Repentance grounded on Faith in *Jesus Christ*, the One Repentance accepted with G O D.

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

Bexley in Kent, on *Wednesday* the 11th Day of *April*, 1744. the Day appointed by his MAJESTY for a General Fast.

By *HENRY PIER S*, M. A.
Vicar of the Parish; sometime Student of *Trinity-College, Dublin*.

Moreover, all the Chief of the Priests, and the People transgressed very much, after all the Abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the House of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem: And the Lord G O D of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had Compassion on his People, and on his Dwelling-place: But they mocked the Messengers of G O D, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of G O D arose against his People, till there was no Remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees.

2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 15, 16, 17.

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgression, and the House of Jacob their Sins.

Isai. lviii. 1.

When ye fast, be not as the Hypocrites. Matt. vi. 16.

L O N D O N :

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T O T H E

Inhabitants of the Parish of *Bexley* in *Kent* ;
those of them especially who heard not
this Discourse.

(1) **A**S there be some of you, my Brethren, who demand a Reason of the Change in my *Conversation* and *Preaching*, since the two first Years of my Ministry among you : When I was, (I speak it with regret, and to my Shame) because a *Manpleaser*^a, accounted a good Preacher, and one who was obliging and complaisant, (that is servile) or who, in the much-mistaken Sense of the Words, became *All things to all Men* : I am willing, (and that to remove all just Occasions of Offence) to answer you, in this Particular. And to satisfy every one *that asketh a Reason of the Hope that is in me with Meekness and Fear*.

(2) After that I had passed near fifteen Years of my Ministry (an ignorant, blind Watchman^b !) in the *Spirit of Slumber*—knowing neither the great End of the Gospel, nor the Reason for which a Dispensation thereof was committed to me—*propheying falsely* ; *propheying Deceits*, *speaking smooth things*^c ; or (as one of you told me, 'twas a Minister's Business to *soften* the harsh things that are said in the Bible) explaining away both the Promises and Threats of the Gospel. And yet still (or rather *therefore*) in credit with that People,

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^a Gal. i. 10.

^b Isai. lvi. 10, 11, 12.

^c *Ibid.*
who

who loved to have it so^d,---after I had still a longer time, even of a Child^e, (through the unclean Spirit, a Spirit of Infirmity) continued to receive the Grace of God in vain---was inadvertent of God's Providences to me, or of the Drawings of the Father to his Son, and quench'd the Motions of his holy Spirit in my Heart---after I was well nigh lost in DEISM, or bare natural Religion, which yet alas! I came not up to---after I had for many Years rested safe in that other Gospel; a legal or human Righteousness^f; a Negative Harmlessness; a bare Ethic Honesty, without the Love either of God or Man in my Heart; and yet *this*, this latter, as it is not natural, but the Power of God, so is It alone the fulfilling of the Law^g; the one acceptable Principle of good Works^h:---After I had prided myself, (looking down with Contempt upon the wicked World) in my Form, neither knowing, nor desiring to know the Power of Godlinessⁱ. And alas! What is Godliness [Godlikeness] without Power---Power over the Devil and Sin? It is as meer a Name as Christianity without Unction^k; or Christian Religion without Christ, and its Blessings and Privileges through him.---In a word, after forty Years of my Life spent in seeking Happiness out of God, and Goodness in myself; it pleased God still to bear with me; to strive with me yet longer; and to send to me his Servants John and Charles Wesley, who startled me out of my golden Dream into some Knowledge of myself---in the filthy Dungeon of my own Heart.

(3) I found, (to sum up the Heads of my first Conversations with them, and of their preaching in my Church) that I was a fallen, immortal Spirit, full of all the unholy Tempers of Satan, inspired into the whole Race, in that Spirit of rebellious Independance, YE SHALL BE GOD'S YOURSELVES.---That I was a fallen Spirit, I say, hastening on to Happiness or Misery,

^d Jer. v. 30, 31. ^e Mar. ix. 17, 21, 22. ^f Gal. i. 6, 7, 8, 9. ^g Rom. iii. 20, 28. ^h Ibid. xiii. 8, 10. ⁱ 1 Cor. xiii. 3. ^j 2 Tim. iii. 5. ^k 1 Jo'm ii. 20, 27.

fery, as I should chuse to be restored to my *primitive Original Likeness* to God, or continue to sin in my fallen Circumstances; as I should chuse to be guided and enabled by an infinitely-wise and powerful God; or rest (as some naturally do) in a *Self-sufficiency* — that as I was, through *original Sin*, born in an absolute Incapacity to enjoy God, I must look to be *born again* [*ανωθεν* from above] not only with the *bare Sign*, or ministerially with Water; but of the *Spirit*¹ — with the *Holy Ghost* and *with Fire*; with Grace and Love; or be *created anew in Righteousness and true Holiness*^m — that till I should be *saved* from the Damages of the Fall, *Guilt and Pollution*; or till through *Faith* in the *Power of Christ's Death and Resurrection* on me, I should *die* to Sin, and *rise again* unto Newness of Lifeⁿ; till I be justified and sanctified; or till I am *saved* here from Sin^o; I could not look to be *saved hereafter*, from the wretched Wages thereof^p. — And that as the *Truth, as it is in Jesus*, or the great Truth of the Gospel is ~~I. H. J. C.~~ *thus* that we *put off the Old Adam*, and that *we put on the New Man Jesus Christ*^q: So the Ends of the Gospel are by no means answered in me, till this great Change be wrought.

(4) From these Principles I found that I had been in the dark hitherto. — That, notwithstanding my natural Righteousness, *so highly esteemed among Men*, *so abominable in the Sight of God*^r, I was *dead in Trespases and Sins*^s — That *thus* I must continue, till I *heard the Voice of him who is the Resurrection and the Life*^t. — That something higher than a moral or natural Religion (for that, that *which is born of the Flesh is but Flesh still*) even a Righteousness equal to the infinite Justice and Purity of God — THE

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¹ Rom. iv. 11. Ch. Catechism. Off. of Infant Baptism. Matt. iii. 11, 12. ^m Eph. iv. 21, 22, 23, 24. ⁿ Phil. iii. 10. Rom. vi. 5. ^o Matt. i. 21. ^p Rom. vi. 23. ^q Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24. ^r Luke xvi. 14, 15. ^s Eph. xxi. ^t John v. 25.

v The P R E F A C E.

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD^u — the *imputed*^u and *imparted*^u Righteousness of *Jesus Christ* was necessary to remove the Misery of my Fall — that in order to obtain this by *Faith*, my Life was now a State of *Probation* — a Time graciously allotted me of God, to recover his Favour, his Pardon, and lost Likeness in — That to this End, all Divine Revelation, especially the Gospel, was given — And that however a *Heathen*, who has not had the Blessing of this Gospel, may be saved (for the Merits of *Christ still*, as he died for every Individual of Mankind^w) may be saved, I say, by the best Use of the one Talent * — Right Reason and natural Equity ; (the one Condition required of *him*) I, and all others, who are under the Sound of the Gospel, are, *besides* these Things, (for every *Christian*, in his under Character, is strictly moral) call'd through it, to *greater*, to *inward* Holiness ; and must be *saved from Sin*, by a Conformity to it, or by *being made like his Master* ^x.

(5) This new View of myself (if I may be said to have ever seen any thing of myself before) as having been an *Antichrist*, (for there are more *Antichrists* than the *Pope* and *Mahomet*) as having been a Devil in the Flesh, through my hellish Tempers, producing evil Works : though *called to be a Saint* — a Christian — one *anointed* with the Spirit of *Christ* : This Knowledge of myself, I say, occasioned a Change in my Conversation and Conduct. Such a Change (an outward one at least, for my Heart is not yet clean) as made me restless to *be*, what I have hitherto been falsely call'd, A CHRISTIAN. And soon after, it pleased God to give me a Concern for you also — to make me consider, what I am call'd to, as a Minister of *Christ* (I write the Word trembling) — an Ambassador of God, even to *beseech* you, to *pray you in Christ's* Stead.

^u Rom. iii. 22. Chap. iv. Col. i. 26, 27. 1 Pet. i. 2. ^w Heb. ii. 9. * How wretchedly this one Talent is (generally) abused, appears from the Parable of the Talents. ^x Luke vi. 40. 1 John iv. 17.

The P R E F A C E.

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Stead to be reconciled to God^z, by accepting of his already Reconciliation to you^z, on his own Terms of Repentance and Faith: Yea, call'd for the perfecting the Saints for the Work of the Ministry; for the edifying the Body of Christ.

(6) In order to this, it pleased God to impress upon my Heart some few Texts of Scripture, which occasion'd as remarkable a Change in my preaching to you, some of which, in particular, were these. *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel, therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and give them Warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not Warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked Way, to save his Life, the same wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity; but his Blood will I require at thy Hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his Wickedness, nor from his wicked Way, he shall die in his Iniquity; but thou hast deliver'd thy Soul^a. Thou shalt speak my Words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear^b, I charge thee before GOD and the Lord Jesus Christ, preach the Word. Be instant in Season, and out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine, for the Time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine^c. (Alas! Is not this Time come, for can there be a worse yet?) It is required of Stewards, that a Man be found faithful^d. Whosoever (through Fear of offending) shall deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven^e. I take you to record this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men; for this Reason, because I have not shun'd to declare unto you the whole Counsel of GOD^f, both in the Law and in the Gospel; persuading you by the Terrors of the former, and inviting you by the Promises of the latter. They watch for your Souls, as they*

^{z z} 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. ^a Ezek. iii. 17, 18, 19. ^b Ibid. ii. 7. ^c 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. ^d 1 Cor. i v. 2. ^e Matt. x. 33. ^f Acts xx. 26, 27.

they that must give Account ^s. To mention no more ; *Do I seek to please Men? for if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ* ^h. A Text so directly opposite to the receiv'd Maxim of the World, "If you would be successful among your People, please them!" What! please them in their Sins! or think to please the *natural* Man, by telling him he is a *lost* Sinner! Indeed, were all our People *real Christians*, or truly seeking to be such: and not many of them *so* in Name only; this might be a good Maxim for a faithful Minister of GOD's Word: For even such a Description of the fallen State as should make such *unwearied* Seeker of Christ, find himself to be twofold more a Child of Hell, than he yet thought himself, he would acknowledge to be just; and *though sorrowful yet always rejoice* — rejoice evermore *in GOD his Saviour* — rejoice that he had such a *Saviour*, as could *save* him even in these Circumstances — as could *save* him now to the uttermost ⁱ. Nor could he be displeased, as Unbelievers are, at the Promises, the Privileges of the Gospel; but look upon them as his *Treasure*, his *Happiness*, his *All* — Those Blessings! (to mention no others) so offensive, so grievous to Hypocrites! a *present Peace* with GOD on a Sense of his pardoning Love — a Power to throw off the Devil and Sin — to be made *again* a Partaker of the Divine Nature, *through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience*. — In a word, *The Kingdom of GOD within you* ^k, even Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost ^l!

(7) These Texts of Scripture, with many others impressed upon my Heart by *Him*, who alone can *open our Understandings*, that we may understand what is otherwise a *sealed Book* ^m, occasion'd as remarkable a Change in my Discourses to you, as the other Providences did in my Conduct: For from meer *Ethic Harangues* (overlooking your fallen Inability, either to *do* or *will* any thing that is good, and taking for granted

^s Heb. xiii. 17. ^h Gal. i. 10. ⁱ Heb. vii. 24, 25. ^k Luke xvii. 21. ^l Rom. xiv. 17. ^m Luke xxiv. 45. Matt. xiii. 10—18. Phil. ii. 13.

granted your *excellent, rational, manly* Powers to fulfil the Law of God)—from *dead, barely moral* Declaimings, *pro virtute, contra vitium*, they became plain *Enforcements* to flee from the *Wrath* to come——*Earneſt Persuaſives* to Repentance, or a deep, feeling, humbling *Self-knowledge* —— *Affectionate, awakening, and zealous* Calls on you, (by ſome unkindly termed Anger and Paſſion) to know your own Hearts, and for this End to liſten to the *Voice of the Son of GOD* °, and the Teachings of his Spirit^P.—*Kind, though weak Admonitions*, (for indeed I can ſay, in great Truth, with the Apoſtle, *I have been with you in Weakneſs, and in Fear, and in much Trembling*) Admonitions to feel the Miſery of having loſt the Image of GOD; and to groan under the Damnation of Sin and Unbelief, while it may be removed —— in this Day of Grace, wherein it may be changed (ſuch Power belongeth unto GOD!) into Joy and Gladneſs; into Health and Salvation. —— In a word, (to ſome who have not Ears to hear) the *Fooliſhneſs of Preaching*. Now have I intended all this, in order to beget in you (working ſtill together with Him^Q, *planting and watering, and looking up to him, who alone giveth the Increate*^R) have I intended all this, I ſay, in order to beget in you a *Senſe* of your Want of the Goſpel; or in order to bring you, when made thus *ſenſible*, to Chriſt; and can ye not *forgive me this Wrong*?

(8) For my Brethren, however you, (nay indeed I) may have miſtaken the Office of a Miniſter of the Goſpel; I now know, that every faithful Miniſter of Chriſt, and Steward of the Myſteries of GOD is a *John Baptiſt*, whoſe Office (and it is to continue to the End of the Goſpel) is to go before the Face of the Lord in the Hearts of the People he miniſters to; to prepare his Way; to make ſtraight in the Deſart (the Wilderneſs of Sin, our waſte Hearts) an High-way for our GOD; to make the crooked ſtraight, and the rough Places plain^S, by *alarming* Mankind of their
Danger,

° *John* v. 25. ^P *Ibid.* vi. 45. ^I *Cor.* ii. 13.
^Q *2 Cor.* vi. 1. ^R *1 Cor.* iii. 6, 7. ^S *Iſa.* iv. 3, 4.

Danger, shewing them their Disease, and pointing out the Remedy as *John* did; BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD ^t; or by preaching the Baptism of Repentance under the first Dispensation — that of the Father *drawing us to the Son* ^u: (for there must be Repentance towards GOD before there can be Faith towards our Lord *Jesus Christ* ^w) and setting the Axe thereof to the Root of Sin *within us* ^x. When the Baptist, the Minister, has thus (through the Power of the reproving Spirit ^y) prepared his People for Christ, then doth he greatly rejoice, then indeed is his Joy fulfilled ^z. How beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of Good, that publisheth Salvation! for then doth he proclaim, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND! — GOD, (who willeth not the Death of any Sinner) pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel ^a! Then doth the once mourning, but now rejoicing Sinner acknowledge, (what, alas! you and I never so much as thought off) that the GOSPEL is a KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION BY THE FORGIVENESS OF ^b SINS. — That it is the POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION (from Sin) to every one that BELIEVETH ^c.

(9) In this Spirit do I publish this Discourse; and do pray God earnestly to bless it unto you: Entreating you that, as I have great Long-suffering for you, so you will bear a little *with my Folly*, as it seemeth to some of you; (that stumbling Block to many, the Foolishness of the Cross ^d!) In a little time, my Beloved,

^t *John* i. 29, 36. ^u *John* vi. 44, 45. ^w *Acts* xx. 21. *Mark* i. 15. ^x *Matt.* iii. 10. ^y *John* xvi. 8, 9. ^z *Ibid.* iii. 29. ^a See our Church's Form in publishing the glad Tidings of the Gospel to penitent Believers in the Forgiveness of their Sins. ^b *Luke* i. 77. ^c *Rom.* i. 16. ^d *1 Cor.* i. 17

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loved, a very little time, it will appear, who is in the Right, and who is in the Wrong. Oh that you and I may be *fitted*, by his own Grace offer'd in the Gospel, to appear before God in that Day! But take this for the present, as a Mark of my Sincerity, that rather than lull you any longer asleep, I would incur the Impertinence of awakening you: Nay rather run the Hazard of raising your Displeasure, and forego all the *bewitching* Honours and Profits that flow from a *ministerial Servility*, than not shew you the Way to *Christ*.

HENRY PIERS.



This Day is Published,

And to be sold at the same Places where
this Sermon is to be had,

TH E Second Edition of a Sermon
preached (*in part*) before the Right
Worshipful the *Dean of the Arches*, at his
Visitation at *Sevenoaks*, the 21st of *May*,
1742.

As also, a *Christmas-day* Sermon on *the*
New-birth, preach'd at *Bexley*, the 25th of
December, 1741.

Both by the Reverend Mr. Piers.

LUKE xiii. 3.

Except ye repent, ye shall All likewise perish.

IT is a difficult Thing with me, to say, whether I more rejoice or am concerned for such publick Appointments of *Repentance* and Humiliation of our Souls before GOD for the Sins of this Nation. For though I rejoice greatly for the Thing *itself*; that GOD has put it into the Heart of his Majesty, to *humble both himself and his People* before the great King of Kings, in order to obtain Pardon for our Sins, and in a most devout and solemn Manner, to send up our Prayers and Supplications to the Divine Majesty for averting those heavy Judgments, which our manifold Sins and Provocations have most justly deserved: Yet am I grieved for the *provoking* Manner, in which this is (*generally*) done; lest we thereby farther incense Almighty GOD, and bring upon ourselves a Curse instead of a Blessing.

2. For when I consider the Practice of those, who by eating and drinking on the *fast Morning*, do plainly shew, that they think, GOD may be imposed on—When I reflect on *their* Hypocrisy, who procure *delicious Morsels* to take off the Pain of fasting—Who after an early Breakfast (perhaps in bed, or not in common Form) dine (it may be) two or three Hours later than usual, on the best Fish and richest Sawces: How is my Soul vexed within me for the Imposture offered to GOD, and for the daring Presumption of those, who notwithstanding tell GOD, afterwards to his Face, *we turn to thee, O LORD, in weeping, fasting and praying*. Nay, how do I mourn in my Soul for those, who may perform the outward Fast more decently, and yet are *uncircumcised* in Heart and Affections—fast not *from* Sin—have not the acceptable

able Sacrifice—the broken Heart ; but are still whole, and therefore need not the Physician ?

3 When I reflect on the empty and fruitless formality of our Fasts, and that even this Shew of Repentance ends with the Day, how do I think of God's Reproof to Israel ? to what purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices ? Bring no more vain Oblations. The Calling of your Assemblies I cannot away with. It is Iniquity, even your Solemn-Meeting^a. Is this such a Fast, saith the LORD, as I have chosen ? a Day for a Man to afflict his Soul ? Is it to bow down his Head as a Bulrush, and to spread Sackcloth and Ashes under him ? wilt thou call this a Fast, and an acceptable Day to the Lord ? Is not THIS the Fast that I have chosen, to loose the Bands of Wickedness—by Repentance to obtain Freedom from the Bondage of Sin : To undo the heavy Burdens, and to let the Oppressed go free—those who were tied and bound with the Chains of their Sins ; and that ye break every Yoke ? Is it not, to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the Poor that are cast out, to thy House ? When thou seest the Naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thy own Flesh^b ?

4 And yet, Wherefore have we fasted, will such Hypocrites say, and thou seest not ? Wherefore have we afflicted our Souls, and thou takest no Knowledge ? Behold ! replies God unto them, in the Day of your Fast ye find Pleasure, indulge, as usual, your sensual Inclinations, and exact all your Labours—are as wordly, and as griping after that Bread that perisheth, as ever. Behold, ye fast for Strife and Debate, and to smite with the Fist of Wickedness. Ye shall not fast, as ye do this Day, to make your Voice to be heard on high^c—and instead of Coming to Christ fainting, and miserable Sinners : Travelling and heavy laden with the Burden of your Sins, justify yourselves—a Thing highly esteemed among Men, though abominable it be in the Sight of GOD^d.—Exalt yourselves against GOD, through your

^a Isa. i. 11, 13.
lviii. 3, 4.

^b Ibid. lviii. 5, 6, 7.
^d Luk. xvi. 14, 15.

^c Isa.

your *negative* Harmlessness, (as you think) — through your Self-righteousness, *that Sin against the Gospel!* or, at best, through a bare *moral* or *natural* Religion.

5 My Brethren, the Occasion of the Words of my Text, we find in the Beginning of the Chapter; where some, who were then present, (the *self justifying Pharisees* of the Day, we may presume) who, like our *present* Pharisees, trusting in themselves, that they are *righteous and despising others*, are always apt to censure and judge hard of those, whom God visits with his fatherly Chastisements——whom he afflicts in Love, or *takes away from the Wrath to come*. For though *this present* be the proper Time, for God's visiting with his *severe* Judgments an *unbelieving* and (therefore) wicked *Community* of People; (as in the last Century he sorely punished this Church and State :) He sends not his Judgments on *Individuals* always to punish them —— he chastises not private Persons in his Indignation, but in Love; and *that* for their Amendment—— for the drawing^e *such* to his Son by outward Dispensations, who will not listen to the inward Voice of his Grace: Reserving the *finally* unbelieving and impenitent (who commonly come not into *Misfortune like other Men* in this Life) to be punished in *that* Time, when he shall punish purely for Punishment's Sake. *These Persons*, our Lord sharply reproves (and indeed on Account of their *self*, their *meer moral* Righteousness, and consequently their no *Need* either of the *Pardon* or *Holiness* of the Gospel, they are the only Persons he was severe to; ever kindly receiving the *mourning* and *self-condemned* Sinner^f) *these Persons*, I say, our Lord sharply reproves for their proud and uncharitable, their rash and severe Censure of the poor *Galileans*, as *Sinners above other Men*, because they suffered such Things: As also for their pretending to assign the *Cause*, why God so severely visited them. For it is no Argument, that a Man is a greater Sinner than others, because he suffers much, or because (to speak the *Infidel* Language of the World) *Fortune* fa-

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^e *John* vi. 44.^f *Luke* xv. 1, 2.

vours him not, or that he is *unlucky* or *unhappy* in his Circumstances. And then having diverted them from others to look into themselves——from the unjust Object of Censure, to the only proper one, which is the *Condemnation* of their own wretched Hearts: He tells them plainly, that they, (tho' holy they might have thought themselves) deserved as bitter a Judgment, and if they prevented it not by timely Repentance, it would undoubtedly fall on them. I tell you (as if he should say) that these Persons were not a whit worse than yourselves. Nay indeed, *I tell you Nay*; but that *except ye Repent, ye, even ye, shall all likewise perish.*

6 As *Repentance*, My Brethren; at least, the *Stirring us up* to Repentance, in order to avert the heavy Judgments of God, which *now* are hanging over our Heads, and ready to fall down on this sinful Land (through its *Infidelity* ripe for Destruction^g), as *Repentance* is the great End of this Day's Mourning throughout this whole Nation.——But especially, as *Repentance* together with *Faith* (for they are two Things, which God hath joyned together, and which no Man can put asunder)——As *Repentance* with *Faith* and their *Fruits*——*Repentance towards GOD* who is offended, and *Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ^h* who is the *one Mediator*, and in whom he is well pleased again——as a Sense of our Disease is prerequisite to the looking out for a Remedy——as *Faith to be healed* must always go before *healing Faithⁱ*. As *these* (I say) are the great Terms, the *sole* Terms of Salvation——of that *great Salvation!*——that *Gospel-Salvation* from the Guilt and Defilement of Sin in this Life, and from the *Wages of Sin* hereafter,——As our Lord delivered his whole *Gospel* in two Words in the very Beginning of his Ministry, saying, *Repent, and believe the Gospel^k*, that is, *feel* your Need of a Saviour and his *Ministration*——his *Ministration of Life, of the Spirit*; his *Ministration of Righteousness^l*;

^g Joel iii. 12, 13. Rev. xiv. 14, 15. ^h Acts xx. 21. ⁱ Acts xiv. 9, 10. ^k Mar. i. 15. ^l 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, 9. and

and *then* receive and embrace both him and his Gospel. — As *this*, in a Word, is the Sum of *all*, it highly concerns us, duly to weigh, in what the Nature of *True Repentance* consists.

7 And here, Let us no longer deceive ourselves, (as I have done in my *natural unawakened State*, when I was alive without the Law ⁿ) in thinking, that *Repentance* consists in a bare Sorrow for Sin: For this we read, *Judas* had ⁿ, as well as *Peter*, who had abundantly more. And *this* is plain in those, who *seem* to sorrow for their Sins, and yet at the same time *plead* for Sin. — Who *seem* to be sorry for Sin, and yet at the same time, not only have in them, but look to to have; yea, are content, satisfied, and think it *meet and right* to have in them all their natural and unholy Tempers; and are both happy in them, and in the Indulgence of the Works of the Flesh; which a *truly penitent* and *self-convicted* Sinner, who is ⁿ *miserable* (as our Church expresses it) *because* a Sinner; because subject to the Dominion of those hellish Affections, that are the Nature of the Devil in him — which a *broken, humble* Sinner (I say) who feels the *Damnation* of Sin, can no more be, than he can be happy in Torments.

8 Nor again, is *Repentance* a *natural* Disrelish of Sin proceeding from Sickness or Weakness of Constitution; or arising from a bare Decay of Nature, whereby the Blood and Spirits do not flow so vigorously to *make Provision for the Flesh*, to indulge the Lusts thereof, as in Health and Strength, or as in the Days of our Youth. In this it is particularly, that *Satan* deceives those, that are past the Prime of Life, and especially *old Men*, who *fancy*, that they *repent*, and that they are grown good, because they *cannot* act with that Vigour; and fight under the Banner of *Satan*, with that Strength, that they did at five and twenty. Here Behold! (generally speaking) the Source of the Gravity and Decency of *Old-Age* — that *Old-Age*, I mean, that is grown *callous* in Sin, and

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ⁿ Rom. vii. 9.ⁿ Mat. xxvii. 3.

and is not (even yet) actuated by an inward Principle of Grace. The *carnal* Mind (which is *Enmity* to God ^o) still remains in their disabled and decrepit Languishings (commonly occasioned through their former Excesses and Debauches) and *therefore* they are as far from a State of Grace — as far from the Kingdom of God — as far from the *End* of the Gospel, which is *Purity of Heart*, or being *restored in the Image of God*. — As abominable are they in God's Sight, notwithstanding this *outward, undesired* Reformation ; as when they blasphemed, and ranted and roared in the Service of the *Devil*.

9 *True Repentance*, however, at first, it may arise from a bare Fear of God — the *Terrors of the Lord* ; (for we are all awakened in a *natural* State ; and the, *natural* Man, who *experiences* nothing of the Love of God in Christ, looks on him as a *hard Man*^p, or as the Devils themselves do ; *art thou come to torment me* !) *True Repentance*, I say, however it may proceed in the Beginning from a slavish Dread of God's Judgments, waiting to fall on us in Eternity, if not in Time ; and so may *keep us* (till we taste of his Love in *Christ Jesus*) *under the Law*^r, in the *Spirit of Bondage*^s : Yet after this *legal* Dispensation is over, it flows more from Love than Fear — *that Love*, which always humbles the Soul before God, and changes the *Spirit of Bondage* into the *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby we are enabled, in our inmost Soul, to cry *Abba, Father*. The *former* of these is little better than that *natural Repentance*, which in the *unconverted* Soul changes Place with Sin every Day or Hour. — A Repentance that flows solely from Self-Love, or Fear of Punishment. It is *their* Repentance, who *Pharaoh like*, repent no longer, than while the Rod of God's Judgments hangs over them. The latter is that *Repentance*, which

^o Rom. viii. 7.

^p Mat. xxv. 24.

^q Mat. viii.

29. Mark v. 7.

^r Gal. iii. 23.

^s Rom. viii.

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which the *Goodness of GOD leadeth unto* ^t — that Repentance unto Salvation — that GOSPEL REPENTANCE, which is the Purchase of Christ's Blood; and which he is *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to grant unto his People* ^u, together with the Forgiveness of Sins: For *these two* has our Lord inseparably joined together ^w; so that they who deny it Now, who put from them, or have never *experienced*, nor desire to *experience*; who thrust from them this *Forgiveness of Sins* (a present Blessing of the Gospel!) may, without Breach of Charity, be presumed never to have truly repented. For as God is *faithful and just to forgive us our Sins*, he cannot defer a Moment to confer this Blessing, when we come up to his Terms.

10 What a Distance are they from the Truth then, *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, who preach up a bare *natural Repentance*, a moral Sorrow without Christ! our excellent Church says, “they are greatly deceived, “who preach Repentance without Christ, and teach “the Simple and Ignorant, that it consisteth only in “the Works of Man ^x”, — a barely human Thing in Man's Power at any Time: Arising from the *natural Conscience* unreprieved, by the Spirit of God, *of Unbelief and Sin* ^y: Whereas we have now heard, that it is the Gift of Christ. “Such Men (she goes “on) may speak indeed many Things of good Works, “and of Amendment of Life and Manners, (purely “in the natural Way) but without Christ, they be “all *vain and unprofitable*; for they that think they “have done much of themselves (meerly on *Ethic Principles*) towards Repentance, are so much the “farther from God, because they do seek those “Things in their own Works and Merits, which “ought only to be sought in our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, “and in the Merits of his Death and Passion and Blood “Shedding ^z”.

11 Re-

^t Rom. ii. 4. ^u Lu. xxiv. 47. ^w Acts xiii. 46.

See our Church's Sense of this in her Exhortation before the daily Service, and in her Collect for Ashwednesday.

^x Homily on Repentance. ^y John xvi. 8, 9. ^z Hom.

on Repentance.

11 *Repentance* then, is not barely a *moral* Dislike to Vice, or (as the *natural* Preacher speaks) “ the being enamour’d with the Beauty and Loveliness of “ *Virtue* ;” or,

Virtus est vitium fugere, & sapientia prima Stultitia caruisse. —————

which *Horace*, and *Aristotle*, and *Cicero* both harangu’d on and practis’d in greater Perfection than he: But it is *After-care*, *After-knowledge*, (as the Original Words import) — Care for the Honour of GOD, and Salvation of our Souls, after utter Neglect and Contempt of both ——— *Knowledge* of GOD, and of ourselves, after our natural Ignorance of both ——— *that Ignorance*, the necessary Consequent of our *would be* independent Knowledge *! It is Sight after Blindness; Wisdom after Folly. Nay, it is more, it is such an *inward feeling Experience* of the Damnation of having lost the Image of GOD ——— of the Misery of a *once* divine Creature, spoil’d of its *Divinity* ——— Such a Sense of its Wretchedness *necessarily* consequent thereon, as makes such *Penitent* utterly to *despair* in himself, till he has recovered it; till he is *restored* in the Image of his Mind; till he has again put on the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Image of GOD ^a; till he is *created anew* in Righteousness and true Holiness ^b. All this, this *Sense* of himself, wrought in him by the *reproving* Spirit of GOD (which alone can effect it in so proud a Creature) convincing him of Sin, stops his Mouth, brings him guilty before GOD ^c, and makes him cry out, O wretched Man, who shall deliver me! What shall I do to be saved! It makes him burst out in the *emphatic* Language of our Church, O GOD make speed to save me! O Lord make haste to help me! It makes him feel with Her the Remembrance of his Sin to be grievous unto him; the Burden thereof to be intolerable. It occasions him to go mourning (with the Psalmist) *all the Day long*; to make him not able

* Gen. iii. 5.

^a Heb. i. 3.

Eph. iv. 24.

^b John xvi. 8, 9.

^c Rom. iii. 19.

to look up ; to make him confess, *there is no rest in my Bones by Reason of my Sin* ; to roar for the very *Disquietness of his Heart* ; to circumcize such Heart, and to set its Axe (the Axe of Repentance^d) to the Root of Sin within ——— the Root of Original Sin ——— the carnal Mind ; to purge out of the Soul the old Leaven of Satan's Image ; and, in a word, to testify that *this* is done by the Fruits of Repentance^e, that is, an entire Reformation not only of the *out-ward* but of the *in-ward* Man. For without this *Change* in the Heart, without this *Renovation* call'd in Scripture the NEW CREATURE, or the NEW BIRTH ; without this Change consequent upon it, I say ; *Repentance is not Repentance* ; it is not even μεταμελεια, *After-Care*, much less is it, μετανοια, the *After*, or *New Mind* ; nor yet, (after our demoniac State^f) the being clothed in our right Mind ——— clothed again in the Image of GOD, of which we were stript naked in our Fall^g.

12 But again, that *Repentance* is not barely a rational, a moral, or human Sorrow for Sin ——— a *Passion* arising merely from natural Principles ; but that it is a *Work of Grace*, the Gift of Christ, (as has been said^h) — the *Effect* of his Spirit, the Comforter, reproving the Heart of Sin, even because the natural Man believeth not in himⁱ, is evident further, from the Doctrine of our scriptural Church, where She says, “ The third Part of Repentance is FAITH, [or “ Faith is a necessary Adjunct of Repentance] that “ Faith whereby we do apprehend and lay hold of the “ Promises of GOD, touching the Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins, which Promises are sealed up unto “ us with the Death and Blood shedding of his Son “ Jesus Christ. For what should it avail us to be “ (humanly) sorry for our Sins, to lament and bewail, “ that we have offended our most bounteous and “ merciful

^d Matt. iii. 10. ^e Ibid. 8. ^f Mark v. 1—10. Ibid. 15. ^g Gen. iii. 7, 11. See St. Paul's Marks of true Repentance, 1 Cor. vii. 11.
^h Acts v. 31. ⁱ John xvi. 8, 9.

“merciful Father; or to confess and acknowledge
 “our Offences and Trespases, though it be done
 “never so earnestly, unless we do *stedfastly believe* and
 “be *fully persuaded*, that GOD, for his Son *Jesus*
 “*Christ’s* Sake, will *forgive* us all our Sins, and put
 “them out of Remembrance, and from his Sight?
 “Therefore they who teach Repentance without a
 “*living Faith* in our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, do teach
 “none other than *Judas’s* Repentance, as all the
 “*Schoolmen* (the celebrated *worldly-wise* Preachers)
 “do, who require only these three Parts of Repentance,
 “the *Contrition of the Heart*, the *Confession of the*
 “*Mouth*, and the *Satisfaction of the Work*. But all
 “*these* we find in *Judas’s* Repentance, which in
 “outward Appearance did far exceed and pass the
 “Repentance of *Peter*; and first, &c.^k Now how
 “chanceth it that the *one* was received into Favour
 “again with GOD, and the other cast away; but
 “because that the *one* did by a *living Faith* in him,
 “whom he had denied, *take hold upon the Mercy* of
 “GOD; and the other wanted Faith, whereby he
 “did despair of the Goodness and Mercy of GOD?
 “It is evident and plain then, that although we be
 “never so earnestly sorry for our Sins, acknowledge
 “and confess them, yet all these Things (these barely
 “human Efforts) shall be but means to bring us to utter
 “Desperation, except we do *stedfastly believe*, that
 “God, our heavenly Father, will (for his Son *Jesus*
 “*Christ’s* Sake) pardon and forgive our Offences and
 “Trespases, and utterly put them out of Remem-
 “brance in his Sight. Therefore (as we said before)
 “they who preach Repentance without Christ^l, and
 a lively

^k See what follows in Hom. on Repentance.

^l It seems there have been others before these our Days who have harangued floridly and very *ethically* for whole Discourses, without one Word of *Christ*, his Gospel, his Salvation *from Sin*, his *Cross*, the *Power* of his Death and Resurrection, his Pardon, and Holiness, or his *present Blessings of Forgiveness* of Sin and

“ a *lively Faith* in the Mercy of God, do only teach
 “ *Cain’s* or *Judas’s* Repentance. The fourth Part of
 “ Repentance (she goes on) is an Amendment of Life
 “ — a new Life in bringing forth Fruits worthy of
 “ Repentance : For they that do truly repent, must be
 “ *clean alter’d* and *changed*; they must become *new*
 “ *Creatures* — they must be no more the same they
 “ were before. These good Fruits are the most sure
 “ and infallible Signs of *true Repentance*. Again, —
 “ They that do from the Bottom of their Hearts
 “ acknowledge their Sins, and are unfeignedly sorry
 “ for their Offences, will cast off all *Hypocrisy*, and
 “ put on true Humility and Lowliness of Heart. They
 “ will not only receive the *Physician* of Souls, but also
 “ with a most fervent Desire long after him. They
 “ will not only abstain from the Sins of their former
 “ Life, and from all other filthy Vices, but also flee,
 “ eschew, and abhor all the Occasions of them.
 “ The Penance, that Christ enjoin’d Sinners, was,
 “ *go thy way, and sin no more*; which Penance we
 “ shall never be able to fulfil, without the special
 “ Grace of Him, who saith, *without me ye can do*
 “ *nothing*.”

13 You see, my Brethren, if I may be thought
 worthy to lay before you the Doctrines of our own
 Church, so full of *Uñction*! I, who am one of those
 who are invidiously call’d, a *Sect* distinct from, and
 disaffected to the *Church* as by Law established; for
 no good Reason that I know, but that we are remark-
 able for raising from Oblivion and Contempt, those
evangelical Doctrines of the *Reformation*, which *some*
 of her Clergy (though so readily subscrib’d) preach
 not, but rather the contrary; and shew their Dislike
 to, in reviling us for “reviving indifferent Matters” —
 “Matters of Speculation” (such as *Justification* and
Sanctification or *Regeneration*) which have happily
 slept

and *Power* over Sin; but indeed the *Mystery of Iniquity*
 began to work, even in St. Paul’s Days, 2 *Thess.* ii.

7. *Gal.* i. 6, 7, 8, 9.

slept (as they say) for many Years^m — for no good Reason that I know, but that we would maintain those *fundamental* Doctrines of our *excellent* Church, which many of our Accusers (both *Clerical* and *Lay*) know not to be her Doctrines when they hear them, and therefore storm at this “NEW WAY” and look upon us as INNOVATORS, who *bring certain strange Things to their Ears*, because we preach unto them JESUS, and the RESURRECTION — a *present* Resurrection from Sin in order to a future Resurrection from the Wages thereofⁿ. So lost is not only her *Spirit*, but her *Letter*, in a great Measure! So overpowered her *native Simplicity* by the Wisdom of the World^o; the *delicate Literature* of our Day! So morose and *cynical*, so rude and unfashionable her Plainness and

^m What an Instance of this Disaffection to the Doctrines of our Church—to the *Hopes of the Gospel*, viz. a *present Sense* of our *Reconciliation* with God, and the *Restoration* of his Image in the Soul, call'd in Scripture JUSTIFICATION and SANCTIFICATION, have we lately had among *us* of this *Diocese*; when a Clergyman of the *Church of England*, at a general Visitation, could tell his Brethren (and 'tis to be fear'd he took it for granted, that they were all of his Opinion) that “Justification and Regeneration, in
“ Comparison of moral Works, and the fundamental
“ Truths of Christianity, are but *Questions and Strifes*
“ *about Words*, which profit not, but to the Subver-
“ sion of the Hearers.” N. B. Every *Christian* (as a *Christian*) is a moral Man, and does all good Works in his Power; but every moral Man who does good Works is not a *Christian*. Justification and Regeneration are, what he seems not to know, the *fundamental* Truths of *Christianity*. But I can almost excuse him, when I consider that he did it, I won't say ignorantly, but in good Nature, to comfort his afflicted Brethren, who were much offended at a rude Discourse on the Occasion before. See Mr. Piers's Sermon preached (in part) before the *Dean of the Arches*, &c. 2d Edit.

ⁿ *Acts* xvii. 18, 19, 20. ^o *1 Cor.* i. 16—30.

and Purity to the polite DEISM — the generous, good natured, & manly, *Natural* Religion of the present Age! You see (I say) our Church's Doctrine of the Nature of *true Repentance*; how *explicit* she is in telling you what it is; from whence it *must* come; to what it must be allied, even a *living Faith* in *Jesus Christ*, if you would have it *Repentance unto Life*^p, *Repentance unto Salvation*^q. You see how careful she is to correct your Mistakes about it; because she knows that it, together with Faith^r, FAITH WORKING BY LOVE^s, or productive of all good Works, are the *sole* Conditions of obtaining the Blessings of the Gospel, *viz.* THE TURNING EVERY ONE OF US AWAY FROM HIS INIQUITIES. You see how much she has the Honour of GOD and the Glory of Christ at Heart. How jealous she is of every thing that is *barely human*, of whatever has no greater a Power than the Strength of Man? How jealous she is of our *Ethnic* or natural Works, which *before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his holy Spirit* (she says, and gives her Reason for it) *have in them the Nature of Sin*^t? How little she esteems (what we *naturally* pride ourselves upon) our *Free-will*, and *Power to do good*^u — our airy notional Merits, and shadowy Presumption of a Reward for them^w. And thus jealous she is, lest as we take up with that *historical* Assent — or that Credence which we give to Man, who is a *Liar* — lest as we take up with this (I say) for the Faith of a *Christian*; so we think *Repentance unto Life* to be no greater (alas! not half so sincere often) no greater, than that Sorrow which we have for having offended one another — a Worm lifted up on a higher Clod of Earth than ourselves.

14 Let us then, my Brethren, (lest we likewise perish with the unrepenting, because *unbelieving* World) let us be admonished by our own Church, to look up to Christ to *give us Repentance*; for this his Gift *alone*, is *Gospel Repentance* mix'd with Faith; the ONE REPENTANCE acceptable to GOD. Let us

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look

^p Acts xi. 18. ^q 2 Cor. vii. 10. ^r Mar. ii.

15. ^s Gal. v. 6. — vi. 15. ^t Art. 13th.

^u Art. 10th. ^w Art. 14th.

look to his Spirit to break our Hearts by shewing them to us *. Let us enlarge our Notions of Repentance, by considering it not so much an *Act* as a *constant Habit* of Mind ; for though we may rejoice because we have found the *Saviour of the World*, by seeking him sorrowing, let us know (what is a *Paradox* to the World) that *this* is Part of the Christian Character, *as sorrowful yet always rejoicing* †. The true Christian does not so properly say, I have repented, as I *do* repent ; I *die daily*. Repentance is an *habitual Humility*, or a constant Desire of always seeing and knowing ourselves, as GOD sees and knows us. It is a constant *Self-denial* and *taking up the Cross* — a continued *Mortification* — a *Death and Burial* with *Christ* — such a Participation of his *Priestly Office*, as enables us daily to offer up to him on his Cross, our unholy Affections — It is a constant *self-emptying*, a *Juge Martyrium* — the Business of our whole Life, so long as one *unmortified Lust* remains alive in us. Nay, it is the hating our own (sensual unholy, ungodly Tempers, which are our natural) *Life* — It is that great Duty which our Lord says, we must submit to, if we will be *his Disciples* : And indeed all such as have a *single Eye*, and *feel* the Wretchedness of the *old Nature*, will chuse it as a Duty *indispensible*. But alas ! how is this *Test* of * *Christian Discipleship* universally evaded ! more *honestly* indeed by the unawakened World, who openly confess, that they like it not ; but more *hypocritically* by such, who though they call themselves the only Children of GOD, brand it with the Odium of “ being under the Law.” Let us thus enlarge our Notions of *Repentance*, and not barely humble our Souls before GOD (or rather look up to him to be humbled) for what *even* this World (byass'd in Favour of the Devil) allows to be Sins. Such are, I think, only Murder and Theft ; and these rated so, only on human and *political* Principles, not the Law of GOD. For, (not to say that they are both hurtful to Society) the *latter*, it seems, is unbecoming a *Gentleman* ; the *former* only so in *some Circumstances* ; for it is his Duty, says his Creed (the

Judg.
* *John* xvi. 8, 9. † *2 Cor.* vi. 10. * *Luke*
xiv. 26, 27, 33.

Judgment of the World) to gratify all his natural Tempers—the Tempers of him who was a *Murderer* from the Beginning! *Anger, Wrath, Malice, Revenge*; if he is contradicted, or his *sacred Will* opposed — his *Honour* engages him to condemn Him, whose *alone Honour* is ^a, and to despise those pitiful Graces of *being slow to Wrath*; of *Forgiveness* and *Meekness*; of returning Evil with Good; of *turning the other Cheek*; of *loving Enemies*; of *Patience*, and *Forbearance*, and *Long-suffering*. His Character and the Spirit of a Gentleman oblige him to fight Duels — to pursue his Adversary to Death; if the Idol, SELF, be in any wise offended or blasphemed. As for Fornication, Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, profane cursing and swearing, and some others; they are looked on by the World as small Matters, if not genteel Accomplishments. The *natural Man*, who is *past feeling*, and who sees as little of the *Sinfulness* of Sin, as he does of the Love of God; commits these Sins, yea, all Uncleanliness with *Graciness*, and goes to Bed at Night with as little Remorse for them, yea, with as much *Chearfulness* as if he had lived *soberly, righteously, and godly* all the Day long — (What an undeniable Proof of that *Blindness and Hardness of Heart*, which our Church prays to be deliver'd from!) Let us beg of God then, to shew us our own Hearts, to *reprove* us deeply of Sin; and that not only, that we may *feel* our greater Need of a Saviour, and come to him properly disposed by an unfeigned Repentance; but that we may enlarge the Catalogue of our Confessions; and no longer take our Estimate of Duties and Sins from that World that hath not yet received the Truth^a, but *lyeth still in the wicked one*^b; but submit to let God tell us, what we must *do* and what *avoid*.

15 Let us more particularly, my Brethren, as we are call'd upon by those, who have supreme Autho-

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^a Num. xxiv. 11. *Ye Busy, ye Great World!* how is it, that ye see not, that ye are pleasing the Devil, and that ye are serving him faithfully in your Parties of Pleasure, your Journeyings, Physicking, or looking over your Accounts on the Lord's Day?

^a John xiv. 17. ^b *Εν τῷ Πονηρῷ κεῖται.* 1 John v. 19.

rity over us, and to whom accordingly we owe Obedience, not only for *Wraths*, but also for *Conscience Sake* — as we are call'd upon by God, and his *Anointed*, our *Sovereign Lord King George* — Let us unfeignedly repent; and in order hereto, let us earnestly pray to God, that he would enable us to *know* ourselves, as we are known by him, and then we cannot but repent. Let us pray, that his Word, which is quick and powerful, and *sharper than any two edged sword*, may pierce our Souls, and make us to *discern the Thoughts and Intents of our Hearts*; that we may so judge ourselves, as our Church speaks, *that we be not judged of the Lord*. O let us repent for our *secret Faults* — those Sins of our Nature, which the *Natural Conscience* cannot come at, and which the Spirit of the Lord only can reprove us of, and convince us to be Sins — our *Heart Sins* — our unholy Tempers and Affections, that are the necessary Consequence of our having lost the Likeness of God^c; into the Room of which immediately succeeded the *Image of the Devil*^d; in all such our *natural and carnal Affections* as are his Nature in us, (*viz.*) a *rebellious Spirit of Independance* on God; a *Self-will* opposite to his; our *Pride*, *Concupiscence*, or Love of the Creature, or *Self-love*; our *idolatrous Covetousness*; our *Anger*, *Envy*, *Hatred*, *Malice*; our *Hypocrisy*, *Deceit*, and all other such hellish Dispositions, as it is the one End of the Gospel to root out of our Nature (originally divine) by replanting the *Image of God* in us, or (as the Apostle expresses it) by making us again *Partakers of the Divine Nature*^e.

16 Let us repent of our *Unbelief*, — that *Unbelief* which the *natural* unawaken'd Soul never dreams to be a Sin, though it be the *Sin of Sins*; THE SIN against the Gospel — that *Unbelief* which makes Men reject the Gospel, and prefer *DEISM*, or a bare Religion of Nature to it — that *Unbelief* which gives God the Lye; as it disputes his *Veracity*, and makes light of his Promises of *Pardon* and *Holiness* — that *Unbelief* which makes even many, who

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^c Gen. iii. 7, 11. ^d 1 John iii. 8. Hom. *Christmas Day*. ^e 2 Pet. i. 4.

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(yet) call themselves *Christians*, to put the Gospel of Christ from them ^f, in his two great Blessings (*viz.*) a *present* Forgiveness of Sin, and a *present* Power over it — those Blessings! that (did we believe) would make us a peculiar People; a *glorious Church, holy and without Blemish; not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing* ^g; would absolutely defeat the Artifice and Malice of the *Devil*, and restore us from the two great Damages of the Fall, *Guilt* and *Pollution*, the first in the Justification, the latter in the Sanctification of our Souls from Sin. Let us repent, I say, of that *Unbelief* which lurks *unquestion'd* in the Soul — that *evil Heart of Unbelief that causes us continually to depart from the living GOD* ^h — to depart from Him to seek Happiness in the Creature, and Salvation in ourselves. O let us repent of our Unbelief, for it is a *damning Sin* ⁱ, as it keeps us from *Christ*, who is a *Propitiation* for all other Sins. For thus, says he, He who has Power, even *ON EARTH*, to *forgive Sins*, and much more now (if possible) now that *all Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto him* ^k: Thus, says he, *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men* ^l; if they repent and believe ^m, while the *acceptable Time, the Day of Salvation*, lasts. And that the Sin of *Unbelief* (if finally persisted in) is *closely* allied to the Sin *against the Holy Ghost*, I could easily prove, would the Time permit ^{*}.

17 But

^f Acts xiii. 46.

^g Eph. v. 27.

^h Heb. iii. 12.

ⁱ Mark xvi. 16.

^k Matt. xxviii. 18.

^l Ibid.

xii 31, 32.

^m Mark i. 15.

* Take this (for the present) by way of *Specimen*. If no Man *speaking by the Spirit of God*, calleth Jesus *accursed* ⁿ, as he in Effect does, who slights his Gospel, and denies the Power of his Mediation in the *present* Forgiveness of Sins, and *cleansing from Sin* — in *Justification* and *Sanctification*: If no Man can say, that *Jesus is the Lord*, the great God, who forgiveth Sin and Iniquity ^o — the J E S U S from Sin ^p —

ⁿ 1 Cor. xii. 3.

^o Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

^p Matt. who

17 But to proceed: When we have set the *Axe* of Repentance^u to the Roots of Sin within us — to our Unbelief — to our Self-will — to our independent Spirit (consequent upon Satan's telling us we should be Gods ourselves*) — to our Concupiscence, (the direct opposite to the Will of God) or to the carnal Mind which is Enmity to God^w; all, all the necessary Consequences

who SAVETH FROM ALL UNCLEANNESS^q, but by the Holy Ghost — How does not he speak against his Spirit — the *Holy Ghost*, (and so acknowledgeth not the Trinity) who denieth these Things; who denieth the Spirit's Agency? And that *this* is the Spirit's Agency or Mediation is plain from our Lord's own Words, who thus explains the Office of the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit's Commission; *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you*^r. And when he is come (not only in general, as on the Day of Pentecost, but into every private Heart) he will reprove or convince^s the World (and those effectually who stifle not his Convictions) he will reprove them of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment; the whole Process of the Work of Grace in the Soul from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness — from the old Nature in Adam to the New-BIRTH in Christ! So absolutely necessary is that Spirit's Ministry, who yet is so little thought of, and who through Unbelief is spoken against. He it is who is to receive all from Christ that concerns our Salvation, and apply it to us. This Spirit of the Father and of the Son, is to awaken, to draw, to convert, to justify, to sanctify; in a word, to REDEEM, to SAVE fallen, dead, guilty, and polluted Sinners^t.

^q Ezek. xxxvi. 25—30. ^r John xvi. 14. ^s Ελεγεῖς, he will demonstrate to the Soul these Particulars, let the unbelieving World speak never so much against the Knowledge of Salvation by the Forgiveness of Sins, L. i. 77. against the full Assurance of Faith, Heb. x. 22. against the abiding Witness of the Holy Spirit, 1 John v. 10. ^t John xv. 26—xvi. 13. ^u Matt. iii. 10. ^w Gen. iii. 5. ^x Rom. viii. 6, 7.

Consequences of having lost the Image of GOD ! *then* shall we have less to do (if I may so speak) to *repent* of the following Sins — the Streams of these latent Springs^x. Some few of which, even the *unawaken'd* World allow to be Sins. And indeed, (so lost is all Sense of the *reproving Spirit*, that *must* shew us the Bottom of our Hearts !) to *repent* only of what the *Generality* of Mankind acknowledge to be Sins, is just like the foolish Policy of that Man, who should think his Garden or Field sufficiently wed because he had crop'd off the Stalk or Leaf only ; for while the *Root*, the Image of the Devil, the *carnal Mind*, the *original Infection*^y, lies undisturbed by a *heart-breaking Repentance* ; the lesser Sins, such as Murder and Adultery, profane Cursing and Swearing, and such like, will be continually shooting up.

18 But let us *repent*, my Brethren, of the lesser Sins also ; and of *such* Sins as the World, *that loveth its own*, counteth not Sins ; such as Love of this World ; and *that*, because the Spirit of God says, if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him^z — Conformity to this World ; its Poms and Vanities which we have so solemnly renounced in Baptism — those *Desires of the Flesh*, *those Lusts of the Eyes*, *that Pride of Life*, which the same Spirit says, are not *of the Father*, but *of that World that passeth away*. Let us *repent* of that worldly Taste (for is it not that Vanity which we have renounced) ? tho' call'd *good Manners* and *polite Breeding* — those “ innocent ” worldly Amusements and Diversions that take up such Room in the Soul, and turn it away from God — our *Luxury*, *Excess*, *Extravagance* in the Use of God's good Creatures, call'd *Magnificence*, *Hospitality*, and *Generosity* ; and many other such Deceits of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, from which our Church prays for a *present Deliverance* for her Children. Let us *repent* of that *Abundance* of our evil Hearts, out of which our Mouths speak

^x James i. 14, 15. ^y Art. 9th. Hom. for *Christ-mas* Day. ^z 1 John ii. 15.

speak in Oaths and Curses ——— that hellish Practice
 (that has parted *even* with the *Form* of Religion) of
 damning our own and others Souls ; so contrary to the
 Spirit of that Gospel, which *saaveth* Souls, and which
 yet, such *Profaners* profess to believe ——— that *sitting*
and speaking against the Most High ——— that swearing,
 and blaspheming his tremendous Name, for which (as
 the Prophet says) the Land mourneth ^a ——— a Vice !
 so peculiarly practised by us, that it may be called the
English Sin. Let us *Repent* of our Drunkenness and
 Whoredoms ——— our *Sabbath-breaking* and Neglect
 of the publick Worship of God, ——— our Chambering
 and Wantonness, our Strife and Envyng, ——— our Vio-
 lence and Oppression, ——— our many Acts of Injustice,
 ——— our Murders and Thefts ; for though we may say
 (through the Ignorance and Blindness of our Hearts)
 that we have never robbed any Man, or stole his
 Goods ; yet, we know, and (what is more) God
 knoweth, that we have *coveted*. Though we have
 never slain any Person, yet we know, yea, and God
 knoweth, that we have *hated* many ; nay, hated
those, whom we should peculiarly love for *their*
Works Sake ; even those that *would* teach us the Way
 of Salvation. Now, what saith the Spirit of God ?
Whoso hateth his Brother is a Murderer, and ye know,
that no Murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him^b.

19 Yea, Let us humble our Souls before God, for
 what we have hitherto vainly depended on for Salva-
 tion, *viz.* our *bare natural Works* : For I speak not to
 those that are without, but such as *call* themselves
Christians. Not but that good Works must be done by all
 Men, whether in a natural or spiritual State. The *one*
Talent which God hath given to all Men, as it requires,
 so is it *sufficient* for the *Opus Operatum*. But if such good
 Works as a Man may do upon *this Principle* without
Charity, that is, the Love of God and Man, make us
 full of ourselves ^c : — If *such* good Works (as they always
 do)

^a Jer. xxiii. 10.
 xiii. 3. Art. xiii.

^b 1 John iii. 15.

^c 1 Cor.

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do) swell us up with Pride, whereas such as proceed from the Love of God, as constantly *humble* the Soul— If such good Works make us *self-sufficient*; — if they *lessen* our Sense of the *Want* of Christ and his Gospel: (for are there not many good Christians in our Day, who understand as little of *Poverty of Spirit*, of *Mourning*, of *Hungring and Thirsting after Righteousness*^d, as they do of Justification itself, or of Sanctification?) — If such good Works, together with the *Externals* of Religion, make Men easy without Christ (as I have heard some say, *that indeed they saw no great Need of him.*) — If they make us *self-confident*, or create such an high Esteem of ourselves, as to cause us with the *Pharisees* of old, to *deride Christ*^e; (his *Forgiveness of Sins*, his *new Creation*) and to *justify ourselves*^e; then are they (indeed) Subjects of *Repentance*: Then are they *abominable in GOD's Sight*^e: Then are they the Prophet's *filthy Rags*^f, and the Apostles *Dung*^f. What I mean then, is, that we *repent* of those Works, that are *not done as GOD willeth them to be done*, says our Church; that is, in *Faith and Love*. And indeed, even by good Works (the Fruits of Faith) shall *no Flesh be justified in GOD's Sight*. Being *justified* (as many as are so) or *accepted in the Beloved*, through Faith. — (*That Faith which justifieth the the Ungodly*^g) before we can do a good Work^g. Let us *repent* of the *Sinfulness* of our Duties, and peculiarly of those good Works, which we have done with an *evil Heart* [Matt. vi. 23.] with an Heart neither purged from the Guilt, nor cleansed from the Filth of Sin: Especially if such Works be made *Matter of Merit* before God — in a Word, our good Works, the good Fruit of a bad Tree. Whereas our Lord says, the Tree [the Man] must be made good, before it [He] can bring forth good Fruit.

20 Let us correct our Notions of Religion hitherto; and know, that however *bare Morality*, or *outward Religion*

^d Matt. v. 3, 4, 6. ^e Luke xvi. 14, 15.
^f *Isaiah* lxiv. 6. *Philippians* iii. 8, 9. ^g *Rom.*
 iv. 5. *Arts.* xii, xiii.

Religion may do for *States* and *Commonwealths*, yet God requireth of *Christians* still a *higher Principle* of Action, than bare Reason, even FAITH, and *that* in order to bring Man back from his *would be* Independance on him^h, — that however *Circumcision*, or *Uncircumcision* may do for a *Jew* or a *Heathen*; if we are *Christians* God requireth us to be *new Creatures*¹. And as the Heart is the better Part polluted with Sin: He requireth also something *stronger* than Reason to *cleanse* it, and to restore *Love* and *Truth* in it. He wills us to *worship him in Spirit and in Truth*, as he says; and therefore Religion, *Christian Religion* I mean, is nothing short of the *Love of God* — of *Purity of Heart* — of a *single Eye* — of that *inward Holiness*, without which *no Man shall see the Lord*. And this is all (and who is he that has any Regard left for the *Bible*, can deny these Things?) that we mean by *Perfection* in this Life.

21 To say no more; Let us repent of our *Religion* hitherto: For (generally speaking) it has been no more than DEISM, or a *bare Religion of Nature*, (forbid by our Church, under Pain of her Curse^k.) Lifting us up against, instead of humbling us before God — Leading us from, instead of bringing us to, Christ. — Such a daring Opposition to the Wisdom of God (declared to us by Revelation¹) as nothing but infinite Patience could have borne with so long! Nature [and her Religion] is always *proud*, and carries the Notion of Merit in every Thing she does. Her *Ignorance* (and *that* because she would KNOW *independently* of God^m.) Her Ignorance of the Misery of her desired *Independance* — of her Fall — her Ignorance both of herself and of God — that *Ignorance*, which is the very Source and Spring of this *Pride*, makes her bring in *even God* her Debtor. Indeed, whatever proud Man may think; *the World by Wisdom cannot know GOD*ⁿ. One would think, that four thousand Years Experience were sufficient to prove this: And yet, it seems it is not. For Men (by Wisdom, by

bare

^h Gen. iii. 5.¹ 2 Cor. v. 17.^k Art. xviii.¹ Col. ii. 3.^m Gen. iii. 5.ⁿ 1 Cor. i. 20, 21.

bare Reason, by Learning, by Philosophy would know God Now. And therefore it is, that the *Teachings of GOD*°, and Divine *Inspiration*^P are so much become the Subject of Ridicule * (alas! what must become of this *adulterous Generation!*) even though the Promise of the Spirit, — the *Promise* of the Father^q (*I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Flesh*^q) be the *peculiar* Blessings of this Gospel-Day. Had God known or willed, that bare *unassisted* Reason, (the maturest Result of which so many Years prove to be *outward* Religion

° *Isai.* liv. 13. *Jer.* xxxi. 33. *John* vi. 45.

^P *Matt.* xvi. 17. *First Collect of the Communion Office.*
5th Sunday after Easter. 19th Sunday after Trinity.

* Blush ye [*Christian*] Philosophers of this Day, who *always* resist the Holy Ghost — ye *Antitrinitarians*, who by Agency (*Inspiration*) deny himself: Blush I say, to hear a *heathen* Philosopher about two thousand Years ago, say; *Nemo vir bonus sine aliquo AFFLATU DIVINO unquam fuit.* You say, you see: But is it not an *irrefragable* Proof of your Blindness, that you *cannot* see, that what you call *Enthusiasm*, viz. (the *Teachings of GOD*, the *Convictions of Sin*, *Righteousness*, and *Judgment*, or in one Word, our Church's *Inspiration*) is the very Foundation — the Divine Source of *Christian* Religion: However, I will allow, it is not of your *Natural* Religion, which makes you self-holy, which makes your Works meritorious; so meritorious as to be the *Condition of your Salvation*. But how is it, that ye don't see thus much; that those whom ye have in the utmost Contempt — the Scum of Mankind — the *Reprobates*, as you call them, but whom *we* are daily inviting and receiving to the *Hope of the Gospel*, and many of whom we think will *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you*, if ye *persist* still in your *Natural* Righteousness; how is it that ye do not see, that *these* have just the same Notions of Religion with your learned and self-righteous selves, and join with you in the Cry against the poor hunted *Methodists*. In many Things you liken us (against your Wills) to Him whose Servants we are seeking to be. *Mat.* xvi. 1. *Mark* xii. 13.

^q *Luke* xxiv. 49. *Joel* ii. 28.

Religion at best, if not impure, wicked, idolatrous Superstition, — had he willed, that Sacrifices or Lustrations — that Cicero's HONESTUM, or Aristotle's Δικαιοσύνη, could bring us to him: He needed not to have added any thing to the Labours of *these* Men: For excellent they are in their Kind. Would to GOD! that many, who *call* themselves *Christians* (for all *real Christians* rise much higher) came up to them! But when he has so plainly told us that in *Christ alone*, (that is, in our *restored Humanity* in Him) he is *well pleased* with us^s — that *all Men should honour the Son as they do the Father*^t — that the *Father loveth the Son and hath given all Things into his Hand** — that he that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son hath not Life — that it hath pleased him to gather together *all Things in Christ*, both *which are in Heaven and which are in Earth*^u — that we have *Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins*^w — that his Sufferings were our Atonement; the Wrath he underwent, our Peace; his Purity (not only imputed but *imparted* to us^x) our Sanctification and Holiness — and that an *unfeigned Conformity* to every Thing, that *Christ* was (for every one that is perfect — a *true Christian* — *anointed with and into his Spirit, shall be as his Master*^y) a willing *Conformity* to his Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension, are so many *Requisites* in us, to make us *truly* (what we profess to be) his *Disciples*. Since *this* is the Case — since *this* is the Message of the Gospel, which *we* of the *Clergy* are commissioned (as *faithful Stewards*^y) to deliver to our People, even “that GOD
“ DO TH pardon and absolve all them that *truly Repent*, and *unfeignedly* believe his holy Gospel” —
“ that he giveth us his Holy Spirit in order that our
“ Lives

^r See, in his Offices, Cicero's Instance of the Rhodian Merchant.

^s Matt. iii. 17.

^t John v. 23.

* *ibid.* xiii. 3

^u Eph. i. 10.

^w Col. i. 14.

^x Rom. viii. 9

ⁱ Pet. i. 2, 15.

^x Luke vi. 40.

ⁱ John iv. 17

^y 1 Cor. iv. 2.

"Lives may be pure and holy." Since this is the Case, I say; since *this*, this Pardon of Sin, this Holiness, or Dominion over Sin, is the *Ευαγγέλιον*, glad Tydings; what an Insult on the Divine Wisdom and Goodness to reject this *Gospel*, and return into Nature again! to make no more of it (as some learned Divines have done) than to call it "a Republication of the Law of Nature. That *Grace* is but another Word for *Virtue*:" Whereas our Lord says, *that which is born of the Flesh is (but) Flesh*! What an Insult to set up this *Dagon* in Opposition to the Lord JEHOVAH; and to cry to it (as most of the World do) *great is Diana of the Ephesians*!

22 But again, (as a farther Argument to Repentance) let us compare ourselves and our Lives with those of our Adversaries, with whom we are now engaged in War; and against whom we are this Day, praying to the Lord of SABAOth for Success. Are we *better than they*? no, in no wise; but indeed much worse; and therefore what greater Need have we of Repentance, if we would engage God to prosper us against them? For supposing, that we are only as bad as they (and indeed both as wicked as the Devil can make us; for he bears a peculiar Spite against all, who only bear the Name of Christ) supposing, I say, that we are only as wicked as they: Yet, we are therefore far worse; both in the Sight of God, and in the Judgment of all reasonable Men: And that, for this Reason, because we have a purer Religion — a Religion reformed from the Errors of theirs, — a Religion, which allows no Plea for the Devil at all — no venial Sins; no Indulgences; no Purgatory, but what our Church calls, in the Blood of Christ, Now — a Religion that admits of no Substitutes for giving the Heart to God: For instance, no Superstitious, unscriptural Ceremonies; no worshipping of the Host; a Substitute for eating (by Faith) of that Bread which came down from Heaven! No Penance without a broken Heart; no Pilgrimages without the Labour of

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Love:

γ Vid. Hom. for Good-Friday.

Love: No Austerities without the *Work of Faith*. To say no more, a *Religion* that giveth the whole Heart to God, and divides it not either with *Saint* or *Angel*, or (what is more odious still) *human Works*, and Merits. Now I say, if (notwithstanding this purer Religion) we are as bad as they, we are a great deal *worse*, for we are accountable for five Talents; we sin against greater Light — the Light of the Scriptures which they have not; and therefore our Lot must be that with the Servant, *who knew his Master's Will and did it not* ². Besides, they act up to their Principles, but *this* we do not; they regard, are in subjection to, love and adore their Church; this we do not. Nay indeed, are (generally) such Strangers to her, that we know her not when we hear her; and therefore they who preach her Doctrines are called by the Vulgar; a *Seet*, *Dissenters*; *Papists* and *Presbyterians* at the same Time.

23 But indeed, where alas! is this Church? what is become of her? does she subsist any where (generally speaking) but in Paper and Letters? how are we fallen from her *Reformation*! are not her principal Doctrines buried in Oblivion, if not openly spoken against? Surely she is gone after *that Gospel* (*the Gospel of the Grace of G O D*) without which she cannot subsist. O! my Brethren, let us call her back, if there yet remain any that will *dare* to take her by the Hand, of *all the Sons that she hath brought up* ^a. Let us call her back, I beseech you; for she loudly proclaims the *Gospel* to us. Her Cry to all her Children is, *Ho, every one that thirsteth* ^b; let him *take of the Water of Life* freely ^c. She offers a *free present* Pardon to every penitent Sinner, though never so abandoned he have been, in his ignorant or carnal State. Let him come [believe ^d] now; let him come as a Sinner, a *self-condemned* believing Sinner; tired of the Service of the Devil; sick of Sin, and *willing* to be healed of it, or *be made whole* ^e; and he *shall in no wise be cast out* ^e.
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^a *Lu ke* xii. 47.

^a *Isai*. li. 17.

^b *Ibid*. lv. 1.

^c *Rev*. xxii. 17.

^d *John* vi. 35.

^e *John* v. 6.

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i. 26.

She boldly proclaims the Privileges of her believing Children: She tells them, that God *teaches their Hearts^f, gives them a right Judgment in all Things^f*. She prays, that he would *defend them with his heavenly Grace, that they may continue His forever, and daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more, until they come unto his everlasting Kingdom^g* — that as he has forgiven her true Sons, her spiritual Children All their Sins, he would *strengthen them with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and DAILY increase in them his manifold Gifts of Grace^g*. She prays, that we may obtain *Pardon and Peace* — that we may be *cleansed from all our Sins^h* — that we may be *regenerate and made G O D's Children by Adoption and Grace, and be daily renewedⁱ* — that we may be purified even as he is pureⁱ — that by the Inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, the Thoughts (Affections, Tempers, Inclinations) of our Hearts may be cleansed^k — that we may evermore rejoice in his Holy Comforts — ~~yet~~ we may have *Power and Strength to have Victory, and to Triumph against the World, the Devil, and the Flesh^l* — yea, that we may *utterly abolish the whole Body of Sin^l* — She bids us Look up to Christ, not only as a *Sacrifice for Sin*, but also an *Example of Holy Life^m* — and tells us, that our *Business as Christians*, is to follow the Example of our Saviour Christ, and (as in the first Creation) to be made like unto himⁿ. Let us call her back, I say, by returning to her *spiritual Constitution*, (the great Bulwark against Popery, and its necessary consequent DEISM!) by returning to the *Doctrines of her primitive Liturgy, Articles and Homilies*. For if we call her not back (at this Time especially) many serious Christians of her Communion may think, that, as some of her Sons not only make

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^{f f} Collect for Whitsunday. ^{g g} Confirmation Office.
^h 21st Sunday after Trinity. ^{i i} Collects before Christmas, and 6th Sunday after Epiphany. ^k Collect beginning of Com. Office. ^{l l} See Office of public Baptism. ^m Collect 2^d Sunday after Easter. ⁿ Gen. i. 26. 27.

light of her distinguishing Doctrines, *Justification* and *Sanctification*; but (with the Papists) make other Things, even our own *fleshy Works, Conditions*, nay, *Causes* of Salvation; there would be no great Difficulty, (should God, for our *Contempt* of her, among other national Provocations, prosper our Enemies against us) there would be no great Difficulty in such Persons (already *half Papists*) to embrace Popery again.

24 But again, Let us repent, my Brethren, from the strong Motive in my Text, *lest we all likewise perish*. For though, as I have said in the Beginning of this Discourse, God punishes not *Individuals* in this Life always for Punishment's Sake, but in Love mostly, and to draw ° *those* to his Son, who will not listen to his *still Voice* (the inward *Reprovings* of his ^p Spirit) to draw them by what the *blind* World call *Misfortunes*; reserving the *finally* Impenitent to that Time, when he will punish *indeed*——punish *purely* for Punishment-sake; yet wicked (because unbelieving) *Communities*, must, *as such*, be punish'd in *this* Life, unless they prevent it by a timely, a bitter, and unfeigned *Repentance*. Indeed, my Brethren, there is no *Medium*; we must either *repent* or *perish*: We must either *feel* the Misery——the Damnation of having lost our *all* with the Loss of God's Image; that so we may come to him, *hungring* and *thirsting* after his Righteousness (or the Recovery thereof)——mourning for the *New Birth*, the *After* or *New Mind*; as I have told you *Repentance* (in the *Original*) implies, or else submit to undergo the yet greater Misery, of dying (through the Want thereof) for ever. We must, I say, either thus *repent* or *perish*; for God is offended, and the Offender, Man, must either humble himself by *repenting*, that is, *forsaking Sin*, says our Church^s, which cannot be done without the Pain of *pulling out the Right Eye, cutting off the Right Hand*; or

° *John* vi. 44, 45.
Church Catechism.

^p *Ibid.* xvi. 8, 9.

^s *Vid.*

or else, he must go *whole*, with these Members — these darling Lusts, into *Hell Fire* — not intended for him (let *Predestinarians* say what they will) as the giving of the Gospel plainly proves; but for the *Devil and his Angels*.

25 Once more: I call upon this *whole* Nation in you, my Brethren, to *repent* — to repent, in particular, of these *three Things* (the three Sources of our *unexampl'd* Profaneness and Wickedness!) which I mention again, because (generally speaking) it is secure and *unawaken'd* in them; I mean our *Unbelief* (for should the Son of Man come now, could he find Faith upon the Earth?) and its *Consequents* — the resting in a dead fruitless Opinion of Christ, called Faith, in a bare natural Religion — and would to God that *even this* were practis'd! It might answer the Ends of civil Government, tho' not of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or of his Kingdom within us^r — a negative Harmlessness; a dry, *unaffecting Formality*; an outward Decorum, or decent Civilization — those Signs! which this adulterous Generation seek after, whilst they reject the ONE SIGN that shall be given unto us, *viz. the Power of Christ's Death and Resurrection*^s — the burying the old Adam, and the raising up the New Man Jesus Christ in us^r — that great Truth of Truths; the TRUTH of the Gospel; the TRUTH as it is in Jesus^u! I call upon them, Secondly, to *repent* for their Contempt of God's Promises, from the Beginning of Revelation to the End thereof^u — for their denying Christ before Men — for their rejecting of the Gospel of Jesus Christ — for their putting it from them^w in its three prime Blessings (especially;) — the Offer of a Sin-forsaking Repentance, (the Gift of Christ^x) — a present Forgiveness of Sins,

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^r Luke xvii. 20, 21. Matt. vi. 10. ^s Matt. xii. 39, 40. ^t Office of publick Baptism. Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5. ^u Eph. iv. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. Gen. iii. 15. Rev. xxij. 16, 17. ^w Acts xiii. 46. ^x Vid. Church Catechism. Acts v. 31.

consequent upon it; (for, as I have said, our Lord has join'd them together) — and a present *New Birth, New Creation*, or Dominion over Sin and the Devil *. I call upon them, *thirdly*, to repent for their having resisted the *Holy Ghost* ^z, and their still *blasphemous Denial* of his Agency [*Inspiration*] a Sin more aggravating *now* than ever! because this *Age* of the World is more immediately under the Direction of the Comforter ^a — because *these* be the *Days of God's Spirit*, of which it was long since prophesied, *they shall all be taught of GOD* ^b; *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh* ^c. O my Brethren, the Sins that the *natural Conscience* is a little startled at; (which I have more than once told you is not sufficient to reprove us of Sin) — the Sins, that the Generality of our *Penitents* are a little serious upon, when they have neither Business nor Diversions to take of “such Melancholy” — *those* are little in Comparison of these *sinful Sins* — this *Unbelief*, this *putting the Gospel from us*, this *speaking against the Holy Ghost*: And yet, (see the Emptiness of a *human Repentance*!) who, who take *these* Sins into the Catalogue of their Confessions? Would to God, my Brethren, ye could see the Signs of these Times! Look they not as if the Period of God's Gospel-Dispensation to the *Gentiles* was hastened on by their Unbelief? and that he was going to call in again his old People, the *Jews*; but that before he would cast us *Gentiles* off for our Unbelief, he would once more (such is his Mercy) make us an Offer of the *Power* of the Gospel? O may such as despise its Power — its Blessings of *Pardon* and *Holiness* — of *Justification* and *Sanctification* (attainable only now, enjoyable only in this Day of Grace, this Day of Salvation) may such as *contradict and blaspheme against these Things spoken by Paul* ^d in all his Epistles — *the greater things than these*

* These are some of the *principal* Hopes, Promises, and Blessings of the Gospel, and that in order to remove the Damages of the Fall; or I know not what the Gospel is. ^z *Acts* vii. 51. ^a *Heb.* ii. 3, 4, 5. *John* xvi. 7—16. ^b *Ibid.* vi. 45. ^c *Joel* ii. 28. ^d *Acts* xiii. 25.

these^e, says our Lord, the Things which his Disciples could not then bear from him^f; which human Nature cannot receive, but *with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven*^g — May such Opposers of the Gospel; such Fighters against GOD, tremble at the Words of this Apostle, which may now be properly inverted: *It was necessary, that the Word of God should have been spoken to you also; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting Life; lo! we turn to the Jews*^h again. And indeed, is not that Time approaching, if not begun?

26 But to conclude. If I have spoke in the Air hitherto — If my Words have been as a sounding Brass, or as a tinkling Cymbal — If none of *these* things move you; be persuaded, my Brethren, to *repent* for dearer — for temporal Concerns. For *these* also are at this Time in *Jeopardy*. If the Power neither of Scripture, nor of the Doctrines of your scriptural Church make any *Impression* on you, have some little Concern for the *Form* and the *Letter*, which ye can yet bear, for, ye would hope (as is but *too apparent* in our Lives) that *they* require neither *Truth* nor *Change* in the *inward Parts*.

27 And indeed, are not *these* Things also in Danger? our Properties, our Liberties, our Lives, as well as our Religion, the *Form* whereof we *still* defend? Is not God's vengeful Hand, with a drawn Sword in it, hanging *now* over our devoted Heads? Has he not let loose upon us our bitterest, and most implacable Enemies — all the Powers of Popery! which, for above two hundred Years, have sworn Destruction to our Religion and Liberties? Have they not lately, more than once, intended, nay attempted an *Invasion* of our Land, to dethrone our most gracious Sovereign Lord
King

^e So necessary are St. Paul's Epistles! which yet I have heard some of Reputation in the learned World, say, *It were no Matter if they were all burnt.* John i. 50. xiv. 12. ^f Ibid. xvi. 12. ^g 1 Pet. i. 12. ^h Acts xiii. 46.

King George, whom God long preserve! and set a *Pretender* to his Kingdoms over us; who though he might for a *while* (should God in Vengeance for our *Impenitence* and *Infidelity*, prosper him) seem to defend our Laws——our sacred and civil Rights, would soon over-turn our *Church* and *State*, and bring in *Popery* and arbitrary Power. But in the midst of Judgment how has God thought on Mercy! he has as yet blown over that Storm. VENTI FLANT & dissipantur. And yet this *Reprieve*——this *Respite*, is but a YET FORTY DAYS, and NINEVEH SHALL BE OVERTHROWNⁱ, if we repent not; repent not, I say, by turning every one of us from his evil Way. O! that we, who call ourselves *Christians* may imitate that Heathen King and People in a deep and fruitful Repentance^k! Indeed, if we do not, the *Men of Nineveh* shall rise up in the Judgment against us and condemn us; for they repented at the preaching of *Jonas*, and behold a greater than *Jonas* is here, and now preaches to us in the Words of my Text, EXCEPT YE REPENT YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH.

28 O, my Brethren, that I had Power to affect your Hearts, by shewing you what kind Warnings God has given this *Infidel* and *Unbelieving*, and therefore profane People; before he take his Kingdom from us, and give it to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof——before he give us up to that Destruction——(his sore Judgments, the *Sword*, and the *Famine*, and the noisome *Beast*, and the *Pestilence*¹) which he yet tells us, we may prevent by a true and unfeigned Repentance! for have there not been, and are there not still Signs both in Heaven and in Earth? (O! that we adverted to the *Sign of this Time*!)——Signs and Warnings, which the *spiritual* Eye sees plainly——Signs and Warnings to avoid the Wrath to come——the impending Blow before he strike! Have not such fiery *Meteors* as have been frequently seen for near thirty Years last past, and blazing Stars; always been looked on by such as fear God; as *Fore runners* of Dearth, and Plague, and Famine, and Wars, and

^{i k} Read the third Chapter of *Jonah*.
xiv. 21.

¹ *Ezek.*

Desolations ; unless prevented by Repentance ? Has not GOD been calling us to awake out of our long Sleep for some time past ? but, alas ! nothing will awaken *some* but the *last Trumpet* ! And as for Signs on Earth, Has there not been a general Awakening * all over the Land for these last 5 or 6 Years ? — a critical Time for *England*, as I have observed elsewhere ^m ; perhaps the last Offer of the Power of the Gospel ! if embraced, how *Christian* may we become ! if rejected, how soon may we expect to share in the Judgment of the once beloved (while faithful) *ASIAN* Church ! how soon may we look to have our *Candlestick* removed from us, and the very *Form* and Name of *Christianity* (which are yet left) quite taken away from us !

29 But may GOD avert these dire Judgments by our *Repentance* this Day ! may he hear the Prayers and accept the unfeign'd Repentance of this Nation this Day ! may the Repentance begun this Day not end with it, but *continue* and *increase* till GOD have Mercy upon us, in restoring the *Spirit* and *Power* of his Gospel ⁿ ! So shall *he* also repent him of the Evil ^o, that he intended to do to us ; so shall our *Sins* that are as red as Scarlet be made *White as Snow* ; for on our GOSPEL REPENTANCE they shall be wash'd in the Blood of the *Lamb*, that was slain to take away the *Sins of the World* : So, being justified by Faith, we shall have Peace with God ^p, and all other the present Blessings of the Gospel, contain'd in all those precious Promises ^q, which in *Christ Jesus* are YEA and AMEN ^r ; so, in a word, shall our holy Religion (as it is derived from the *holy Scriptures*, and contain'd in our *Liturgy*, *Articles*, and *Homilies* ; would to GOD I could say in

our

* Indeed so general is the awakening in many Parts of the World, as well as in *England*, that it is not improbable but that it may be the *Beginning* of that awful and solemn—that important and amazing Period of Time, spoken of by our Lord, *Matt* l. xxiv. 14.

^m See the Preface to a Sermon preach'd at *Bexley*, entituled, *Christ born that we may be born again*.

ⁿ *John* vi. 63. *Rom.* i. 16. ^o *Joel* ii. 13.

^p *Rom.* v. 1. ^q *2 Pet.* i. 4. ^r *2 Cor.* i. 20.

our Hearts) be continued to us; and the present Royal Family a lasting Blessing till Time shall be no more.

30 O Lord, Hear the King in the Day of his Trouble, Let thy Name, O GOD of Jacob defend him — send him Help from thy Sanctuary, and strengthen him out of Sion. Assist him with thy Blessing upon his Arms — assert his Cause — fight thou against them that fight with him — and, in thy good time, restore and perpetuate Peace, and Safety, and Prosperity to him and his Kingdoms. O grant him (at this time) an unshaken Trust and Assistance in thee alone, for vain and deceitful is the Help of Man. Defend him, we beseech thee, in particular — O defend him and his Royal Relations from thy holy Heaven, even with the wholesome Strength of thy Right Hand. And grant that we and all his Subjects may fear the Damnation^s of rebelling against him, or (at this time) siding with his Enemies — and that (duly considering, whose Authority he hath) we may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey him IN THEE and for THEE, according to thy blessed Word and Ordinance through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one GOD, World without End.^c Amen.

^s Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

1. JESU, if still Thou art to Day
As Yesterday the same,

Present to heal, in me display

The Virtue of Thy Name.

2. If still thou go'st about, to do

Thy needy Creatures Good,

On me, that I Thy Praise may shew,

Be all Thy Wonders shew'd.

3. Now, Lord, to whom for Help I call,

Thy Miracles repeat;

With pitying Eyes behold me fall

A Leper at Thy Feet.

4. Loath-

4. Loathsome, and foul, and self-abhor'd,
I sink beneath my Sin;
But if thou wilt, a gracious Word
Of thine can make me clean.
5. Thou see'st me deaf to thy Commands,
Open, O LORD, my Ear;
Bid me stretch out my wither'd Hands,
and lift them up in Prayer.
6. Silent, (alas Thou know'st how long)
My Voice I cannot raise;
But O! when Thou shalt loose my Tongue,
The Dumb shall sing Thy Praise.
7. Lame at the Pool I still am found:
Give; and my Strength employ;
Light as a Hart I then shall bound,
The Lame shall leap for Joy.
8. Blind from my Birth to Guilt, and Thee,
And dark I am within,
The Love of GOD I cannot see,
The Sinfulness of Sin.
9. But Thou, they say, art passing by;
O let me find Thee near:
JESUS, in Mercy hear my Cry!
Thou Son of *David* hear.
10. Long have I waited in the Way
For Thee the Heavenly Light;
Command me to be brought, and say,
Sinner, receive thy Sight.
11. While dead in Trespasses I lie,
The quick'ning Spirit give;
Call me, Thou Son of GOD, that I
May hear Thy Voice, and live.
12. While full of Anguish and Disease,
My weak, distemper'd Soul
Thy Love compassionately sees,
O let it make me whole.
13. While torn by Hellish Pride, I cry,
By Legion Lust possesst,
Son of the living GOD, draw nigh,
And speak me into Rest.

14. Cast out Thy Foes, and let them still
To JESU's Name submit;
Cloath with Thy Righteousness, and heal,
And place me at Thy Feet.
15. To JESU's Name if all Things now
A trembling Homage pay,
O let my stubborn Spirit bow,
My stiff-neck'd Will obey.
16. Impotent, dumb, and deaf, and blind,
And sick, and poor I am;
But sure a Remedy to find
For all in JESU's Name.
17. I know in Thee all Fulness dwells,
And all for wretched Man;
Fill every Want my Spirit feels,
And break off every Chain.
18. If Thou impart Thyself to me,
No other Good I need;
If thou the Son shalt make me free,
I shall be free indeed.
19. I cannot rest, till in Thy Blood,
I full Redemption have;
But Thou, thro' whom I come to God,
Canst to the utmost save.
20. From Sin, the Guilt, the Power, the Pain,
Thou wilt redeem my Soul.
LORD, I believe; and not in vain:
My Faith shall make me whole.
21. I too with Thee shall walk in White;
With all thy Saints shall prove,
What is the Length, and Breadth, and Height,
And Depth of Perfect Love.*

* See the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Hymns and sacred Poems.



F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 33, line 16, read *who by denying his Agency*.
Line 19, read AFFLATU.

